

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE EUROPEAN: CHANGING PATTERNS OF IDENTITY THROUGH EDUCATION

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This chapter deals with the debate that is occurring in the European countries about the emergence of a new European citizenship. Rhetoric increasingly focuses on the *Europeanization of education* as one of the main trends to accomplish this purpose and to achieve the social and political goals of the European Union.

The first argument is *historical*, and attempts to shed light on the connection between the development of the nation-state and the consolidation of national systems of education, by suggesting that we are participating on the end of a cycle of two centuries in which the school has been seen in the context of a triad of "nationality-sovereignty-citizenship."

The second argument is *sociological*, and takes account of the way in which the phenomena of globalization and localization express themselves in the European educational arena, notably through a new concept of citizenship, which prohibits the nation-state from having complete control over the way schools are conceptualized, and organized.

The third argument is *comparative*, and underlines the need to stimulate the development of a scientific way of thinking, which is capable of reflecting critically and theoretically on changes.

Nowadays, the situation in the European Union countries constitutes a very interesting and stimulating challenge for a comparative approach. Not only in the perspective of direct comparison between two or more countries, but in the sense of global analyses of relations of transnational interdependency.

I - EDUCATION AND THE NATION-STATE: HISTORICAL APPROACHES

1. School Reforms in 18th Century Europe

Political theorists have shown that the emergence of nationalism as an ideology is an 18th century phenomenon, even if certain "national" sentiments can be identified in considerably earlier time periods. Authors such as Ernest Gellner (1994), Benedict Anderson (1983), Anthony Smith (1991), or Charles Tilly (1992) have demonstrated the links between modernity as a structure of thought, and the nation as an ideological system. This thesis runs counter to received ideas about the permanence of nations, which are conceived of as "natural" ways for people to organize themselves.

Two centuries ago, writes Charles Tilly, a new form of nationalism, which was both stronger and narrower than the concept which had preceded it, emerged in European politics: "the idea that people who spoke for coherent nations—and they alone—had the right to rule sovereign states" (1994, p. 133). The reconstruction of a principle of citizenship in the 18th century, has to be understood along with the affirmation of nation-states in the European context. From the 18th century onwards citizenship was expressed within the borders of a sovereign nation, a concept which changed the status of affiliations and loyalties, while bringing with it new systems of identification and belonging.

Nationality, Sovereignty, Citizenship: this forms the triad of reference for a sociopolitical project which grants the State a monopoly on symbolic violence, which is thus labeled legitimate. Schooling plays a central role in the transformation of populations into nations, by granting to a cultural arbitrary the appearance of being natural (Habermas, 1992). The school reform movement at the end of the 18th century has been interpreted in this way, that is as a carrier of a new way of governing, transforming subjects into citizens while simultaneously creating new links between individuals and the State. The concept of *governmentality* (Foucault, 1994), is very useful for explaining a historical project which inscribed educational concerns in the center of the State's modernization project. Henceforth the school would be one of the principal instruments used to forge a national solidarity, in the framework of the invention of a citizenry which thinks of itself in the context of a nation-state, and which serves to justify a politics of cultural homogenization (Rohrs, 1992).

The cartography of educational reforms in 18th century Europe has already been established, most notably by Roger Chartier and Dominique Julia: Amadean Reform in the Piedmont (1729), Pombaline Reforms in Portugal (1759 and 1772), establishment of the Commission for the Study and Reform of Gymnasiums in Austria (1760 and 1775), Reform of *collèges* in France (1763), Commission for National Education in Poland (1774), Alexander Ipsilanti's reform in Walachia (1775), *Ratio educationis* in Hungary (1779), educational reform in the kingdom of Naples (1777), Commission for the Foundation of Public Schools in Russia (1782), etc. This list could also include reform initiatives which took place in England, in

Denmark, in Spain, in Sweden, or in Switzerland¹.

In each of these sites, the reform movements were, naturally, marked by particular national histories and circumstances, but they were also inspired by a common transnational project. This period marks the beginning of a historical cycle, during which the establishment of state control over education is linked to the emergence of the modern state which progressively instituted its double monopoly over legitimate violence and fiscal appropriation (Chartier & Julia, 1989). Ernest Gellner (1983) even asserts that the centralization of the state was a result of the inevitable centralization of education; he estimates that educational systems are a necessary condition of the type of economic development specific to modernity.

Towards the end of the nineteen seventies, educational historians began trying to understand the process of institutional change which took place in the 18th century, while giving a new importance to explanations based on the dimension of the *State* (Archer, 1979). After this point, theories which were centered on the nature and the process of the formation of the State suggested more sophisticated interpretations, linking the creation of national education systems with the need to train personnel to fill government positions, to spread dominant national cultures, and to create political and cultural unity in the heart of the new nation-states (Green, 1994).

2. Mass schooling in the transition between the 19th and 20th centuries

The process of establishing national systems of education lasted throughout the 19th century, in the context of the affirmation of the identity of the nation-states. Yves Déloye (1994) places the school at the center of the process of the formation of civic and national identity; he explains that if nationalism creates the nation, this is primarily to resolve a political question: how it is possible to homogenize the culture of citizens of the nation-state, and, in this way, demarcate the space of civic and national identity, while, simultaneously, circumscribing the territory over which the State exercises its authority. Pierre Bourdieu (1994) develops a similar argument when he refers to the *theoretical unification* operated by the State, which shapes *mental structures* and

¹ Given the large number of bibliographic references dealing with this theme, I will instead, settle for giving readers a few suggestions for further reading: Margaret Archer, *The Social Origins of Educational Systems*, London, Sage, 1979; *Education and Enlightenment*, Proceedings of the International Standing Conference for the History of Education (ISCHE), Wolfenbüttel, 1984; Andy Green, *Education and State Formation*, London, Macmillan, 1990; J. Van Horn Melton, *Absolutism and the 18th Century Origins of Compulsory Schooling in Prussia and Austria*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1988; J. Morange & J.F. Chassaing, *Le mouvement de réforme de l'enseignement en France, 1760-1798*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1974; António Nóvoa, *Le temps des professeurs: Analyse sociohistorique de la profession enseignante au Portugal (XVIII-XX^e siècle)*, Lisboa, INIC, 1987; Marina Roggero, *Scuola e Riforme nello Stato Sabaudo*, Torino, Diputazione Subalpina di Storia Patria, 1981; Antonio Viñao Frago, *Política y educación en los orígenes de la España contemporánea*, Madrid, Siglo Veintiuno editores, 1982.

imposes common principles of perception and distinction, ways of thinking which contribute to the construction of what we call national identity.

The school system thus becomes the site of the production of a new citizenship, which separates itself from traditional attachments to merge with the principle of a national identity. This results in an identity which tends to mix nationalism with the right to govern sovereign states. National territories are graphed out into educational networks which attempt to cover the entire population; the imposition of compulsory schooling (even if, in many countries, especially in Southern Europe, this educational coverage was more symbolic than actual) is a date to remember, as it marks a turning point in the way in which educational politics were envisioned: Denmark (1814), Greece (1834), Spain (1838), Sweden (1842), Portugal (1844), Norway, (1848), Austria (1864), Switzerland (1874), Italy (1877), United Kingdom (1880), France (1882), etc.²

During the 19th century the educational system began to take on a major responsibility in the formation of citizens who were integrated into the project of a nation which was defined, generally, within the borders of a sovereign State. The development of mass schooling, beginning in the second half of the 19th century, constitutes another step in the same process whereby the state took charge of education. This step consisted not only of a change in scale, but also of the consolidation of a model of educational organization and of teaching which had been deployed in Europe all through the modern period. By the turn of the century, a type of grammar of schooling (Tyack and Tobin, 1994) which has constructed and organized the way we think of teaching had become firmly consolidated. Henceforth, this model would function as the only type of school, and, by doing so, exclude all other alternatives. The strength of this model can be measured not by its capacity to serve as the best system, but by the fact that it became the only system which was either possible or imaginable.

The consolidation of state control over education was intimately linked to two other processes: the professionalization of teachers, and the development of scientific pedagogy. The process of professionalization was accompanied by a politics of normalization and control on the part of the State: *normal* schools served to enclose and discipline teachers, who were transformed into agents of the social and political project of modernity; the discourses which were produced in the process, built up a new image of the teacher which combined "old" religious references with the "new" model of the teacher as a civic servant. Furthermore, the attempt to construct a scientific pedagogy has to be seen in the context of a larger project which involved the reorganization of the modern social sciences: the specialization of knowledge granted the new professionals a role of authority within their subject area, while, at the same time, legitimating them within a discourse of social normalization. These efforts to professionalize teachers and to construct a scientific pedagogy form an integral part of a discourse of *social regulation* which tended to redefine the question of teaching within the framework of a new form of State intervention in social life.

² This information was taken from an article by Yasemin Soysal and David Strang, published in 1989 (it contains a few inaccuracies which do not affect the main arguments). The authors also give figures for the coverage of primary education in 1870 in order to put the uneven accomplishments of compulsory education into perspective: Denmark (58%), Greece (20%), Spain (42%) Sweden (71%), Portugal (13%), Norway (61%), Austria (40%), Switzerland (74%), Italy (29%), United Kingdom (49%), France (75%), etc.

If state formation theories furnish us with the most pertinent theoretical framework for explaining the educational reform movements of the 18th century, the world system approach is more appropriate for the analysis of mass schooling and its development, beginning in the 19th century. John Meyer, Francisco Ramirez and Yasemin Soysal (1992) have effectively demonstrated that the emergence and the expansion of mass schooling has followed an identical trajectory in various parts of the world, a fact which casts doubt on theories which tie schooling to the particular economic, political or social characteristics of each country. They support a thesis implying that the nation-state is, in itself a transnational cultural model, within which the education of the masses is one of the principal devices creating symbolic links between the individual and the State.

It is important to keep in mind the relationship between the model of mass schooling and the model of the nation-state. The ontology of modernity constructed a school which played an important role in cultural and national unification. Buttressed by an ideology of modernization and by a scientific rationality, this project successfully carried forward the project of the integration of populations (or more precisely, citizens) within the new nation-states. This was in fact, more than its role. It was its reason for being.

In many respects it is precisely this *raison d'être*, which was again brought into question when one speaks, today, of a Europe after the demise of the nation-state, or of a post-national identity. This is a completely new debate, full of consequences for educational questions, which is being entered into: at the center of the debate, is found the concept of *globalization*. The question which underlies this reflection deals with the pertinence of the nation-state as an arena for decision-making in matters concerning education, given the current multiplication of levels of local and global power.

3. Education and the process of globalization at the end of the 20th century

The literature dealing with the topic of globalization is very abundant and I will only present readers with a few particularly salient ideas useful to a better understanding of contemporary educational debates. The approach used by Anthony Giddens (1990) seems particularly useful to me. To the extent that he envisions globalization as a world-wide intensification of social relations, local events are influenced by events which take place at a great distance, and vice-versa. This is a dialectic process, because some aspects of the local events can go in the inverse sense of the distant relations which configure them. In other words, globalization means forming social relations through undefined margins of space-time, in which the possibilities of transformation are as intensive as they are extensive (Giddens, 1994).

This perspective argues against a linear view of the process of globalization, of a type which is too often envisioned under the label of uniformization and/or homogenization. In fact, the idea of a global culture as a sort of teleological evolutionism, inevitably accompanied by the growing fragility of the nation-state seems inadequate: although reference to globalization is useful to the extent to which it suggests another level of conceptualization, the diversity of local,

national and regional responses constitutes an invitation to talk about global cultures in the plural (Featherstone, 1990). At this point it is useful to give up a vision of the world as a collection of regional and national societies in favor of a view centered on the phenomena of interdependence and cultural diffusion on a global level.

Today the nation's mission of cultural homogenization, which used to be the vocation and unquestioned property of the state school, is being transformed (Hutmacher, 1990). This generalization holds true even if the facts are sometimes contradictory, as is the case in many countries, especially in Eastern Europe which are using their educational systems to reinforce their sense of national identity. Now schools are expected to be able to open up new social practices, to tell stories which are more than merely national histories, and to accomplish the integration of local and global cultures. Discourses of multiculturalism, of local curriculum development, or of communitarian themes which have dominated educational reforms for several years are attempting to change the historical project of the school. They embody a transformation in the mission of the school, which is moving from a relatively unipolar attachment to the nation towards a push and pull relationship between the *small* and the *large*.

The analysis of questions dealing with the matter of sovereignty is even more complex, because it touches directly on the problematic of power. One of the central points of reference of the nineteen seventies concerns a shift in relations between the state, civil society and professional and scientific communities. The reorganization of the state and of its strategies of educational intervention, has led to the emergence of new forms of government. The discursive practices centered on decentralization constitute the best example, to the extent that they create mechanisms of social and professional regulation articulated on several levels of decision making. However, it is also crucial to pay attention to the phenomena of transnationalization, which cause us to question the limits of the exercise of a self-styled autonomous sovereignty.

The next point is one of the most difficult, as it deals with the new citizenships (and here I insist on the plural). The education of citizens has traditionally been one of the goals accomplished by the schools: teachers have been the institutors of an apparatus of adhesion to an idea of what it is to be a citizen of a nation-state. Today we are confronted with an explosion of traditional identities and with an effort to rediscover, or rather to reinvent new identities (Aronowitz, 1992). These new identities are not necessarily territorialized, because communities of meaning are increasingly taking over for localized communities in the consolidation of ties of attachment and solidarity. Yasemin Soysal (1994) provides a particularly good explanation of this matter, estimating that the current principles of citizenship tend to be based more on the universal status of a person than on his nationality.

Here, then, are a few points to reflect on, in considering the influence of the process of globalization on the domain of education. Educational reforms need to be read as authorized discourses (as well as discourses of authority) which introduce new forms of social regulation within the framework of a reorganization of the State, and a reconfiguration of the power structure of the various levels of decision making. The argument developed by Boaventura de Sousa Santos (1995), when he observes that the loss of equilibrium originally incriminated in the paradigm of modernity between social regulation and social emancipation, is important in framing educational thought.

II - EUROPEAN CONSTRUCTION AND EDUCATIONAL POLICIES: SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACHES

The tendencies which I pointed out in the first section of this chapter are markedly evident in the European Union. Today, education constitutes one of the central locuses in which the idea of Europe is being transformed, both on the level of its internal references and that of its external relations. The process of globalization is refected, in the European context, in a project of economic and political integration which is completely original. In Europe, more than elsewhere, one can see that the nation-state has become too small for the large problems of life, and too big for the small problems of life (Giddens, 1990).

It is possible to support the idea that the project of the European Union carries a logic of continual reinforcement which is undermines States, administrative States, as well as political States (Pisani, 1991; Schnapper, 1994); however it is also possible to make a case for the idea that the process of building a united Europe has resuscitated the nation-state as an organizational concept, by reaffirming its political role through the construction of a supranational decision structure (Milward, 1992; Smith, 1991).

One thing is sure: the European Union constitutes the most elaborate legal form we have seen up to this point of defining a *post-national citizenship* (Soysal, 1994). The principle of a *European citizenship* which is thus consecrated, recognized institutionally by the Maastricht treaty, inscribes solidarities in a variety of public spaces. This is a conflictual reality within which local identities, regional loyalties, national sentiments, and European ideologies coexist. Squeezed between pressures from below, towards ethnic and cultural diversity, and pressures from above, towards economic and political integration, Europeans sometimes react with apprehension, and re-enclose themselves within national boundaries (Carnoy, 1993).

This is an extremely complex debate, which has radical consequences for education. In essence, the reason for being and the historical mission of national systems of education, as they have been formed and have developed for the last two centuries, are being called into question. It is for this reason that the study of educational policy is an excellent means of analysis of the limits and potential of the project of the European Union. This analysis is not easy. There is, on the one hand, an official discourse, issuing from Brussels, and the different Member States which implies that education will continue in the future as it has in the past, to fall into the domain of each Member State, which is an idea which excludes from the outset, any effort at harmonizing laws, or at constructing common policies. Nevertheless, the Union has been adopting, on a regular basis, a number of community-wide acts (decisions, recommendations, resolutions, etc. which, although without constraining legal value, have a either a direct or indirect impact on educational affairs. Finally, it is important to take account of a pro-European rhetoric, produced in both within political circles and in scientific milieux which constitutes an obligatory reference point for community wide educational action.

I will propose that European educational systems are currently being subjected to a series of influences which push them towards common patterns of evolution, at least inasmuch as this concerns their institutional configurations, their organizational modalities, and their strategies of

development. This fact is not incompatible with the maintenance, within the borders of each Member State, of relatively important margins of autonomy, more evident in the production of a discourse of national legitimation than in the formulation of alternative policies. I will also maintain that the introduction within the Maastricht treaty of the concept of a European citizenship has inevitable intermediate range consequences on the mission of educational systems and on the definition of "community" policies by different Member States.

1. The sociohistorical context of educational policies within the European Union

In November of 1994, the European commission published a declaration entitled *Cooperation in Education in the European Union (1976-1994)*. After an initial phase marked by hesitation, the Community adopted a series of coordinated actions which culminated in articles 126 and 127 of the Maastricht treaty which dealt respectively with education and vocational training. The list presented by the Commission mentions some hundreds of documents which sketch out a *European educational policy*, although each passage recalls the exclusive competence of the Member States in this domain. This is a precaution justified by the conviction, largely shared by the different Member countries, that education is, by definition, the space within which national identity is constructed: public opinion places education first on the list of those sectors in which decision making power should remain primarily in the hands of the nation. Nevertheless, the Community does, in fact, intervene fairly frequently in educational matters, although this takes place through an "indirect" educational strategy. This intervention consists, on the one hand, of the construction of categories of thought, of organizing language, of proposing solutions which become the dominant schemas for approaching educational problems, and, on the other hand, of acting in a variety of other areas (work, vocational training, professional qualifications, etc.) which involve reconfigurations of the educational system.

The definition of education through the bias of an expanded concept of vocational training

The first type of perversion comes from a definition of education through the bias of an expanded concept of vocational training. For a long time it was assumed that the absence of explicit mention of education in the Treaty of Rome meant that the powers of the Community were limited in this regard. Nevertheless, legal scholars, and, especially, the judges of the Court of Justice in Luxembourg, have interpreted the silence of the treaty in this respect to mean the opposite: that the powers of the Community in this respect were not limited by the law (Shaw, 1992).

Using a subtle legal argument, the judge Koen Lenaerts (1994) explains that the Court of Justice has been obliged to adopt a very expansive understanding of the concept of vocational training, in a way which includes virtually all forms of education which go beyond basic compulsory instruction. Curiously, using an interpretation contrary to the majority of opinions, Koen Lenaerts (1995) affirms that the introduction of article 126 in the Maastricht Treaty does not

expand the powers of the Community in the domain of education. Instead he informs us that henceforth the existence of a legal framework will avoid the possibility of an interpretation of educational affairs taking off in all directions, especially one which incorporates the bias of an expanded concept of vocational training.

At the end of the nineteen eighties, Bruno De Witte, did not hesitate to affirm: "If the Community has laws concerning education, then there is also a Community educational policy" (1989, p. 9). However, it is also important to recognize that this policy was legitimated, in the majority of cases, by a sort of extension of actions taken in the area of vocational training, which enclosed education within an excessively restricted definition. Regarding education solely through the prism of vocational training, the Community has taken a detour which has prevented it from putting into action an educational initiative inspired by any logic other than that of the laws of the market.

The development of a semi-clandestine educational policy

The second perversion results from the European Union's institution of an uncontrolled educational policy, which tries to remain invisible, and does not submit itself to democratic regulation or control. This is a covert educational policy, which cannot be spoken of in public, and as a consequence, does not permit participation, discussion, or judgement by any of the concerned parties. In fact, this situation of "legal semi-clandestinity" (Frediani, 1992) experienced by the Community in the domain of education, has prevented the initiation of any real debate in this area. Strongly based on a logic of expertise, and resting on a technical rationality, the actions undertaken by Brussels have valued normative and adaptive strategies to the detriment of a more *political* attitude.

The question deals with the architecture of power within the European Union, which leads directly to the principle of *subsidiarity* and to the structuring of decisions at the national, supranational and subnational level. Frequently this debate has been framed in a simplistic manner, as if power were a *thing*, a thing which one could divide, add, subtract, give away, or keep. However, simple arithmetic does not work in the field of power, as we can see from the example of the process of European integration.

It is important to understand how the alchemy of power is produced within the European political arena. It is in this way that even as they lose some privileges traditionally linked to the exercise of sovereignty, certain States are using the European project to develop their own identity: see for example, the case of Greece, or the "new" Germany (Marquand, 1994; Taylor, 1991). In addition, the fact of transferring a part of their prerogatives to the European Union does not prevent certain national executives from acquiring an accrued legitimacy which comes to them from the fact of being seated at the decision making table at Brussels: see, for example, the case of Portugal or Spain (Milward, 1992; Sbragia, 1992). Finally, let us take into account the fact that if it is true that there is a supranational consolidation of decision making routines, there is also a reinforcement of power on a subnational level, that is to say local and regional: see, for example, the case of Belgium, of France or of Italy (Cornu, 1993; Schnapper, 1994).

These tensions and contradictions appear in the field of education (Coulby, 1993). In the peripheral countries, references to Europe play a central role in the legitimation of national

educational policy initiatives, and in the imposition of certain laws which would otherwise, have been unacceptable; for these States, the fact of participating in the European Union stimulates them to an *imagination of the center*, that is the idea that they belong to the political center of one of the great regions of the world (Santos, 1994). However, in forming themselves as models for those outside, the central countries have also been able to acquire an additional source of internal legitimacy. This double role is illustrated, in the first case, by the Spanish and Portuguese political reforms of the eighties, and in the second case, by attempts to export German or Danish systems of vocational training.

2. The definition of educational policies within the European Union

Brussels has taken measures in matters concerning education, since the beginning of the seventies, through a diversified panoply of instruments: community acts (decisions, recommendations, resolutions, etc.), community programs (Erasmus, Petra, Lingua, etc.) subsidies and economic aid, etc. There is a long list of documents which define *orientations* at the same time as they construct a *language* to talk about education in Europe³. It is impossible at this point to give this inventory in detail, although this has, by the way, already been collected in two indispensable documents: European Commission, *Cooperation in Education in the European Union (1976-1994)*, 1994; Council of the European Communities, *European Educational Policy Statements (1971-1992)*, 3 volumes, 1987-1993.

Using a necessarily simplified model, it is possible to group, into five major domains, the decisions made on the European level:

- a) *Vocational Training* – Measures taken regarding career or vocational training, along with everything touching on, for example, preparation of young people for careers, to the passage from education to the workplace, to the correspondance between professional qualifications and the schooling of young people, migrant workers, and migrant populations.
- b) *Higher Education* – Decisions concerning higher education, most notably in order to assure the mobility of students, connections between the University and corporations and the

³ This literature is traversed with certain continuities, but also with certain changes, most notably concerning policies dealing with vocational training and the placement of young people in the job market, the European dimension in education, the initiation of certain cooperative programs, higher education or the mobility of teachers and students. Just in the past few years it is important to point out the importance of documents such as the *White Paper on Growth, Competitiveness, Employment* (1993), the *Green Paper on the European Dimension of Education* (1993) or the *White Paper on Education & Training* (1995).

recognition of diplomas; in the articulation between "vocational training" and "higher education" it is also important to take into account pre-service and in-service training of teachers.

- c) *Cooperation and Exchange* – A group of initiatives designed to stimulate cooperation and exchanges, such as the introduction of new technologies into education, the development of distance education, the inception of European schools and multilateral educational partnerships, or the organization of exchange programs for young people, so that a number diverse measures address, for example, the fight against illiteracy, or equal educational opportunity for boys and girls.
- d) *Information and Control* – The construction of technologies of information and control, such as the organization of basic principles, the dissemination of statistics and information about different educational systems, the evaluation of Community programs, or control over the quality of teaching (notably, higher education).
- e) *European Curriculum* – The organization of aspects which affect the development of a European curriculum, the most important of which relate to the European dimension in education, especially the promotion of language education, although these include as well, initiatives in the areas of consumer education, health and environmental education, and propositions concerning decreasing rates of school failure, and favoring the integration of handicapped students into regular school programs.

This systematization into five major domains only scratches the surface of community action in the area of education. In a general sense, the European Commission has justified its intervention by the need to catalyze action within the different Member States. At the same time, the objectives of economic and social cohesion have been omnipresent in the definition and the contents of European educational policy. The rhetoric pertaining to the "exclusive powers" of the Member States has been successively undermined by the facts. Attempts to seize the initiative in educational policy for the European Union are, above all, attempts to make sense of this sometimes contradictory and often unexplained equilibrium. For this reason it is necessary not only to describe *contexts*, and identify *contents*, but also to interpret the organizing rationalities behind the discursive practices which support these policies.

Economic logic

Policies concerning education and vocational training are founded, first of all, on an *economic logic*. Community documents unceasingly repeat the necessity of preparing "qualified human resources" to respond to "economic challenges" and "technological mutations." This logic has restrained the scope of educational measures, while at the same time trying to present the Member States with a *fait accompli*: European economic necessities and the common market, would lead, inevitably to agreements and accords, on the level of the organization of national systems of education (length of studies, level of qualifications, curriculum, etc.).

This economic rationality is accompanied by a neo-liberal orientation which serves to frame discourses pertaining to privatization, to free-choice, and even to participation. The *White Paper on Growth, Competitiveness, Employment* (1993), stresses the convergence between the Member States on the necessity of a *greater implication of the private sector* in educational systems and/or vocational training, and in the formulation of policies for education and training, to take into account the needs of the market and local circumstances. This is a rhetoric which attempts to reconstruct education as a private space, but which is frequently incompatible with the European Union in dealing with the structure of the articulation of the powers of the different Member States.

It is for this reason that it is necessary to regard the metaphor of the "market" as a political rhetoric which carries with it a binary language (State/civil society, freedoms/constraints, public/private) which is not adequate to furnish the intellectual instruments necessary to understand the problematic of governmentality in the arena of education (Popkewitz, 1995).

Discourse about quality

Discourse about quality constitutes another principle structuring the community's actions concerning education. The first objective of Article 126 of the Maastricht Treaty states the following: "The Community shall contribute to the development of quality education." Other materials, such as the *Green Paper on the European Dimension of Education* (1993) attempt to stress the same concept by identifying the added value of action on the community level in the domain of education: this refers, successively, to experiences with educational institutions, to the institution of innovative practices, to the production of new pedagogical instruments, to alternative models for teacher training, etc.

Nevertheless, it is elsewhere, in a reconciliation with the ideology of efficiency and effectiveness, that one can find the most important aspect of the discourse concerning quality. In fact, the use of this discourse is integrated into a greater redefinition of educational policies, in the sense that it renews the value placed on the economic pay-off of education connected to the need to implement higher educational standards to the detriment of cultural and social factors. Discourse about quality must be decoded in the context of this diffuse project, which attempts to replace the objectives of social equity with a reinforcement of academic technologies for educational selection (Lowe, 1992).

Another aspect of this strategy, particularly salient in the European context, concerns the establishment of educational policies, more on the level of *criteria* than objectives and propositions. By *criteria*, I mean a whole series of instruments for evaluation and control (norms, standards, models, etc.) which tend to envision education as a problem of management and organization, and not in terms of social and political issues. Hans Vonk (1991) is entirely right when he points out that this is an essentially bureaucratic perspective. This tendency, which is strongly evident in the European Community, is not limited to an *a posteriori* control, but also contributes to the construction of solutions and to the imposition of a certain way of approaching educational problems.

Rhetoric of Citizenship

Since the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, European citizenship has functioned as a useful reference point in educational discourse. As long as the discussion takes place on a philosophical level, the impact on education is relatively limited, but if we invest the debate with a political dimension, this fact changes. In this respect, the approach of Jürgen Habermas (1992) is particularly interesting, especially when he denounces populations' *deficit of participation* in the European construction, while at the same time demonstrating that at the moment, there is an obvious connection between legal rights, and civil, political and social rights.

Participation thus becomes, the *sine qua non* condition of European citizenship (Imbert, 1993; Marquand, 1994). This is what permits us to break away from the determinism of an education which is enclosed within the interior of a nation-state, and to open our imagination to educational practices which are more European than rooted in local space.

The initiatives intended to promote a European dimension in education must be seen in the light of political restructuring. These discursive rationalities are seizing the key themes of educational reforms in several European countries, and relocating within the framework of the European community: curriculum reform, school autonomy, and the professionalization of teachers.

As far as the curriculum is concerned, there is a discourse dealing with values and the socialization of young people as European citizens, which is frequently accompanied by a reference to multiculturalism and respect for diversity. Democracy, tolerance, or solidarity are all part of a language which legitimates political efforts through the construction of a history of Europe as the enlightened center of civilization.

The Jacques Delors's concept of a *citizenship with a variable geometry* is also being translated into organizational practices. The themes of decentralization and school autonomy form part of a political intervention, and it is for this reason that Jacques Delors believes that the school is aided in taking on a role of social cohesion because its implantation is local and territorial. The translation of the principal of *subsidiarity* onto the level of systems of education introduces new types of regulation (supra and infra-national) between the State, civil society and educational communities.

European educational systems are being confronted, today, by challenges of such breadth that it is impossible to respond to them through partial reforms or adaptations. I have attempted to draw attention to the complexity of the current debates concerning European education. I have particularly stressed the way in which Europe functions as a *regulatory ideal* influencing the educational policies of its Member States. However, in order for education to prepare a citizenship which does not coincide exclusively with national borders, and in order for educational policies to integrate local and global references (that is, to express themselves inside as well as outside of the nation-state), it is essential to effect major changes which reconceptualize the very structure of national educational systems.

There are no simple responses to this challenge: Europe is not necessarily a "progressive" reference in educational policies (Ryba, 1995); in education, nationalism is not necessarily "conservative" or "retrograde" (Miller, 1994); local space is not automatically the most

"innovative" location of educational discourse (Pereyra, 1993). At each moment it is necessary to be able to *think about schooling* in terms of the growing complexity of processes which redefine the multiple locations and identities embedded in contemporary society, and to re-invent the mini-rationalities which make sense of our actions as intellectuals and educators (Santos, 1994).

III - THE TASK OF THINKING ABOUT EDUCATION IN EUROPE

To think about education in Europe is a difficult task. Maastricht has produced a profound crisis in the process of European integration. It is necessary to take advantage of this in order to encourage a more open discussion, with more inclusion of educational problems in the European context. It is true that the Union often recognizes that the European dimension is everyone's affair, and does not belong only to European policy makers; however, this invitation is mainly based on a logic of expertise (the famous "synergy of experts") than on a concept of mobilization or the participation of voices from different scientific spaces.

This exclusion is added to by another particularly insidious one: the idea that educational evolutions would be the fruit of "external constraints" and in no case of "interior will." Without disputing the fact that education is a universe which is more *totalized* than *totalizing*, it is important to give value to an explanation based on actual educational thought and will.

The intervention of researchers in education (and especially of comparatists) must avoid the arrogance of a rationalized vision of change, based on the concept of science as progress. The idea that scientific work can "straighten out" the world is part of an ideology which transforms intellectuals into champions of social amelioration (Popkewitz, 1991).

At this point I will come back to my main idea: the need to stress the importance of educational researchers, especially in Comparative Education, in a post-Maastricht Europe. I will add two conditions to this: first, that the different communities (local, regional, and national) should mobilize around the European debate, transforming it into something which belongs to them; and that research in education, especially in Comparative Education, be capable of producing a critical and theoretical way of thinking, or a way of thinking which is not purely instrumental.

1. Participation by scientific communities in the European educational debate

There are a number of ways to test the participation of scientific communities in the European debate. Given the fact that researchers communicate primarily through scientific publications, it seems to me to be pertinent to identify the presence/absence of the European problematic in two corpuses of documents: the first is constituted by "*national*" journals, one in each country in the European Union⁴; the second is composed of a collection of "*international*"

⁴ *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik* (Germany), *Pedagogisch Tijdschrift* (Belgium), *Dansk Pædagogisk Tidsskrift* (Denmark), *Revista Española de Pedagogía* (Spain), *Revue Française de Pédagogie* (France), "*Pedagogical Review*" (Greece), *The Irish Journal of Education* (Ireland), *Scuola e Città* (Italy), *Pedagogische Studiën* (Netherlands), *Revista Portuguesa de Pedagogia* (Portugal), and *British Educational Research Journal* (Great Britain).

journals published in Europe⁵. In each case, the analysis extends from the beginning of 1986 (the date of entry for Portugal and Spain) and the end of 1993 (date of the full application of the Maastricht Treaty).

I will not enter into a detailed quantitative analysis of the study. However it seems useful to me to use the results to make two commentaries.

The first of these concerns the reduced importance given to "foreign" events in the "national" journals (6.3% of the articles), but, especially, the almost total absence in these publications of reflections on European question, even to the extent that these questions influence the contexts of each country. Out of a total of 2703 articles, only about 15 (0.6%) deal with this problematic. It is not necessary to use particularly sophisticated reasoning to see the indifference of the scientific communities on a national level, towards the debates going on about European education. This demonstrates a striking lack of participation in these debates.

The second point deals with the "internationally" oriented journals, in which it is possible to see the relatively significant impact of a comparative approach in the general sense of the term (47.9% of the articles), although only about a hundred of the texts (6.2%) deal from the standpoint of the European problematic. This represents a feeble presence, especially since it is largely due to the efforts of a hard core of about ten authors, each one of which has been responsible for several articles, and has often been the coordinator of certain thematic issues or volumes. As far as symbolic space is concerned, it seems that the scientific community has not yet "discovered" the European problematic as a source of reflection or collective work.

Without forgetting that the distinction, visions and thought categories of intellectuals are *social practices* which participate in the realities which they are attempting to describe (Popkewitz, 1991), it is important to recognize that the present moment is propitious for a consolidation of structures and research methods on comparative education research.

2. Towards a critical and theoretical Comparative Education

A more qualitative analysis of the articles concerning the European educational problematic reveals a fairly descriptive approach, marked by an acritical adhesion to pro-European rhetoric. This research was produced by a relatively limited group of well-known authors, working in close proximity with the inner circles of Brussels, and its principal objective is to turn researchers into supporters of policy decisions, rather than into researchers capable of making sense of the complexity of educational dilemmas.

Faced with this production, I cannot avoid thinking of the *cameralism* which turns researchers into "the prince's counselors" (Baechler, 1991) or of the *intellectual doxa* denounced by Pierre Bourdieu (1993). In this, I am hoping to be able to join my voice to the concerns of all of

⁵ *Bildung und Erziehung, Comparative Education, Compare, Education Comparée, European Journal of Education, European Journal of Teacher Education, International Review of Education, Prospects, and Ricerca Educativa.*

those who, like Jürgen Schriewer (1992) are attempting to demarcate the difference between scientific research in the domain of Comparative Education, and international reflection, centered on the orientation of reforms and educational policies.

Today, it is important to be conscious of the *limits* of our interpretations, and of the fragility of our theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Comparatism involves the search for new questions which permit us to construct other histories. Our epistemologies cannot continue to ignore a number of the challenges faced by contemporary science, notably the assertion that nothing can be known for sure, and that there is no teleology of history. It is for this reason that it is necessary to interrogate the relationship between knowledge and power on the basis of their localization in a given space/time (Giddens, 1990). Comparative Education must be based on the disruption of traditional *space/time*, which aptly characterizes the present phase of paradigmatic transition from a modern rationality towards a science which, lacking a better name, is designated as post-modern (Popkewitz, 1991; Santos, 1994).

This involves, on the one hand, increasing the historical breadth of comparative work, and, on the other hand, of interrogating the epistemological presuppositions of modernity: reality is no longer seen as an objective, concrete, palpable "thing," but instead we find the need to understand its subjective nature and the sense which is attributed to it by different actors (individual and collective). We are confronted by a new epistemology of knowledge, which defines research perspectives which are centered not only on the the materiality of educational facts, but also on the discursive communities which describe them, interpret them, and localize them in a given space/time (Popkewitz, 1995; Rust, 1991). This historical dimension contributes to the clarification and conceptual articulation of comparison, although not on the basis of a historicist vision of knowledge (Pereyra, 1990).

It is necessary to put into place a series of new intelligibilities, which lead comparatists to pay more attention to history and to theory to the detriment of a pure description and interpretation, to the contents of education and not just its results, to qualitative and ethnographic methods instead of making an exclusive recourse to quantification and statistical facts (Pereyra, 1993). Comparative Education must regard the world as a text, attempting to understand how discourses are an integral part of the power which distributes and divides people and societies, which ratifies situations of dependence and logics of discrimination, which constructs ways of thinking and acting defining out relations to knowledge and research (Der Derian & Shapiro, 1989).

Today's societies (and particularly Europe) constitute an exceptionally stimulating terrain for comparison in education. I insist, first, on the fact that education is a central element functioning as strongly in processes of economic and cultural globalization as the political tendencies towards union which are occurring in certain regions of the world, notably in Europe (Altbach, 1991). This creates new opportunities for Comparative Education, even if it is often the *international* dimension (exchanges, cooperation, support for decision-making, consultation, etc.) which occupies its intellectual spaces, to the detriment of the *comparative* dimension (scientific research, intellectual work, etc.).

One can see, today, an exceptional situation developing in the heart of the European Union, a situation in which the role of investigators is reinforced: let us think, for example about the crisis in legitimacy due to the current wave of Euro-pessimism, which is obliging politicians to

take recourse to the social prestige of scientific settings; but let us also think about the need to give education an increased visibility *vis-a-vis* public opinion, which continues to consider this domain to be essentially relevant to the competence of each Member State. It is important that the various scientific communities appropriate the European problematic, that comparatists construct models which are theoretically more elaborate, and that Europe become a reference point for intellectual work. Without this, the debate will remain enclosed in the logic of experts and political rhetoric. And Europeans will continue to be subjected to, rather than to participate in, the construction of this Europe which is (sometimes) impossible to find.

Europe must pay attention to all of the different Europes (racial, cultural, etc.) which coexist within its territory, and must be able to take into account multiple histories and identities. It has, perhaps, a citizenship with a variable geometry. However, it will never have human rights with a variable geometry. It is crucial that "Europe(s) think of itself as the *continent of diversity* and not as a peninsula in the process of becoming homogenized" (Attali, 1994, p. 11). Educational policies must take account of this reality.

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